There is only one project i.e. Yelahanka DGPP Extension by M/s. Karnataka Electricity Board having capacity of 2x23.4=46.8 MW which is under examination in Central Electricity Authority.

Increase in Price of Petrol

1903. SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the comparative figures of petrol prices both national and international market for the last three years as on date and the reasons for it being higher in the national market;

(b) whether the off-shore drilling has gone down drastically during the last three years;

(c) if so, the details thereof, Statewise; and

(d) the corrective measures being taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) : (a) Information is being collected and shall be placed on the Table of the House.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The details of metreage and wells drilled during the last three years in offshore are as under:-

1993-94	359702	162
1994-95	204116	89
1995-96	163086	79

(d) The quantum of drilling activity depends on implementation of approved field development projects, new prospect generation by basin analysis and evaluation process, results of exploratory and delineation drilling and availability of exploration acreages.

Amendment to Urban Land Act

1904. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE :
SHRI RAM NAIK :
SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government propose to bring about amendments to the Urban Land Act, 1976;

(b) if so, the salient features of the proposed amendments; and

(c) by when these amendments are likely to be put before Parliament ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) and (b) Government of India is considering proposals to amend the Urban Land (Ceiling & Regulation) Act, 1976 in order to make it more workable and effective. The State Governments have been requested to give their suggestions regarding amendments to the Act. A Committee has also been set up for making recommendations to amend the Act.

(c) It would be difficult to give a definite time frame because as per the Constitutional requirement, after the approval by the Government, the Legislatures of at least two States where the Urban Land (Ceiling & Regulation) Act, 1976 is applicable have to concur and pass resolution under Article 252(2) of the Constitution to enable the introduction of the Bill in the Parliament.

Industry Status to Housing Sector

1905. SHRI V. PRADEEP DEV : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there have been persistent demands for according the status of Industry to the Housing Construction Sector; and

(b) if so, the action Government propose to take in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) and (b) The demand for declaring housing as an industry has been raised in the past in the context of requirement of increased institutional funding for the housing sector. It was noted that only service sector part of housing was not getting institutional funding support, as the manufacture of building materials was already within the purview of industry.

With the establishment of National Housing Bank and a chain of housing finance institutions in different parts of the country, the requirement of institutional funding for the housing sector has been significently met. Moreover, refinance from industrial finance institutions, namely, IDBI and ICICI, is also now available for housing projects costing more than Rs. 5 crores on a case-to-case basis without housing being declared an industry.

In the light of the above, the institutional flow of funds to the housing sector has gradually increased and the demand for declaring housing as an industry has abated.

Local Purchase

1906. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :